**my baby, it feels like a lifetime (oh god, i don't think i could do two)**

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# my baby, it feels like a lifetime (oh god, i don't think i could do two)

by Talinor

Summary

"Wil," he said before he could stop himself. "I have a question."

Wilbur looked up to meet his gaze. His smile was small, but easy, his lips were *right fucking there*-- "Sure, what is it?"

There were a couple options he could have gone with. That he was tempted to go with. *Did you mean it when you said you'd take me up on my offer? What the fuck is this? Can I kiss you?* Just to… y'know, name a couple prominent ones.
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Quackity visits Wilbur, for once.

Notes

this is a continuation of my previous work, 'something i might regret', but it also works as a standalone!
the title's from afterlife by nothing but thieves
why? idk, i guess i wanted there to be a constant for this sorta-series
the song isn't really related to the fic, but it in general kinda gives me tntduo vibes
enjoy!

See the end of the work for more notes

Quackity had plenty of things to occupy his mind. Running a nation, getting the businesses set up and ready to open were things a lot easier said than done. Even with the help of those he'd enlisted, work took most of his time away.

He liked it that way. Liked that he could see his dream grow into something *real,* something stunning. Something that would remain in some form for years to come, ideally bigger and better than it was now. Every time Las Nevadas grew, so did his vision for it. He could appreciate the work that'd already been done, but there was always more to do somewhere. It made him hard to distract, his mind nearly immune to distraction.

*Nearly.*

A few times over the past week, his thoughts would wander. There was plenty to think about, some latest news or other in the server, but he didn't care much for it. No, *instead,* he focused on drink-hazed memories of a night not too long ago. When it wasn't focused on Las Nevadas, his mind kept bringing up words he wished he could forget.

*'You're enough, Big Q. For me, for you, for anyone and everyone. We may not always agree, and there's some wear and tear, but that doesn't change the fact that you don't have to justify your existence. What you do with it is another question, but regardless of anything you've done to get to this moment, you're more than enough.'*

There were times he would have *killed* to hear someone tell him that, hold him gently like that. Like he was worth those words. If anyone had told him that Wilbur would be the one to spend breath to do so, he'd have laughed and called them a fucking liar. There was *no way* something like that could be *real.*

And yet, there they'd been. Shoulder to shoulder by the steadfast flames, Wilbur's hand cradling his face like it was precious, whiskey flowing hot in his system as they sat beneath the stars. Unfortunately he *also* remembered what happened next.

*'Trust me. Any other time, I'd accept without hesitation. But not here, not now. I don't want you doing something you might regret in the morning.'*

He still remembered how soft Wilbur's lips felt against his hand. A sign of respect, of *reverence,* from such an unlikely source still confused him. Shook him to the core. Occasionally, a small corner of his mind would pipe up to mention how they *could* have felt if his plan hadn't been shot down. It was always silenced quickly. He didn't need to think about such trivial things. Plus, 'plan' made it sound like he wasn't just being a drunken sentimental idiot, clinging to any source of comfort he could.

Still, certain words lingered.

Wilbur had *wanted* to kiss him. Probably still did, if he wasn't lying or playing around with him. Even said so himself.

It could all be a lie, a trick to get under his skin. But goddamnit it *worked.* That was the most infuriating part: he could- *should*- have left this in the path with all the other memories he turned to ash that night. And yet he couldn't. Those moments had wormed their way into his mind, and they took the opportunity to make themselves known whenever they could.

So, one quiet night, he resolved to find out one way or another. Geared up with a sword but little else. He'd prepare more in most other situations, but he knew Wilbur likely wouldn't be far. Hopefully the weapon would only stay hanging on his belt.

He could feel judging or questioning gazes on him as he walked out of the Nevadas lights into the desert, but no one stopped him. No one even bothered to talk to him. Good. He didn't feel like coming up with some way to save face. The truth would make him sound *utterly pathetic.* Instead, he trudged into the night, his boots slightly sinking into the sand.

Thankfully the first place he thought to check wouldn't be far. Instead of accepting his reasons for not wanting such a chaotic person to join his nation and moving on with his new life, Wilbur had decided to be childish instead. He'd built his own nation next door by the border. But honestly, calling it a 'nation' was an exaggeration. It was a barely-built shack on the edge of a forest's river.

For now, at least. L'Manberg *did* start as a shitty hot dog van front, so he supposed it *was* in Wil's nature to build from unlikely beginnings. Maybe someday this little patch of land could be competition, a real threat to Las Nevadas.

Still, it was *really hard* to think so, looking at the building. It looked like something a new spawner would throw together to protect themselves for a night, then move on from. Even the *van* was built better.

He could see torchlight flickering through the lone window, though. A promising sign.

The door had a button next to it, but Quackity still decided to knock first. Just in case. He didn't think anything inside could be a threat, even without armor, but he didn't wanna stoop to Wilbur's level of dropping in unannounced *completely.* He'd have the decency to announce himself first.

Sure enough, he heard Wilbur's voice muffled through the door. "Who is it?"

"It's me," he doubted he needed to say more than that. "Can I come in?"

It took a second for Wil to respond. "I'm sorry," he said, his tone alight with a mirthful edge. "I don't know anyone called 'me'. Can you try again? Be more specific this time."

Quackity rolled his eyes and pressed the button. The door swung open, illuminating him through light escaping the doorframe. *"This* specific enough, smartass?"

Wilbur's smile widened. "I suppose so. Come on, come on in." He gestured to come inside, barely moving from his casual draped position on an obviously homemade couch. If you could even *call* it that: it was just three oak steps placed together with a big red wool blanket

cover to make it look nicer. It worked well enough, but it did *not* look good. “Shut the door behind you, if you please.”

He stepped into the shack, following the suggestions. His eyes moved to scope out his surroundings, but there wasn’t much to see. A table and some chairs tucked in one corner. A lone bed in another. One wall seemed to be a little dedicated workshop: the crafting table and furnace lay along it, with a big chest in the middle and assorted item frames slung haphazardly on the wall. There was a painting along one of the other walls… but that was pretty much it. Not much for beauty, but he supposed it was more about practicality than anything else.

“So, Big Q,” Wilbur spoke up after allowing him a little time to look around. “What brings you to my humble abode?”

He leaned against the nearest wall, arms crossed. “Wanted to give you a taste of your own medicine, for one,” he teased. “Show you how annoying it can be for someone to just *pop in* unannounced on your land all the time.”

“You say that like you’re annoying me.” He, of course, looked unbothered. “Plus, you *did* knock first, so you’re not really ‘unannounced’. If you’re trying to follow my example, you’ve got *a lot* to learn.”

“What,” Quackity let his voice lower deliberately, into a tone he knew pretty well had an effect on people. He had no proof it’d do the same for Wil, but he had a *pretty good feeling*. “You offering to teach me?”

Now *that* broke the cool, unphasable facade he’d kept up. He blinked in surprise a few times, like one of them would reveal where the fuck a comment like *that* came from. The smile briefly dropped, but it was quick to return. “If you want,” he quirked up a brow. “Is that what you came here for?”

He hummed. “Maybe. We’ll see.” This wasn’t the kind of energy he’d wanted to bring to this discussion, but it was certainly interesting. In retrospect, he probably should have anticipated Wil matching his energy. Most other times, he would change topics, try to dig himself out of the weird hole a conversation like this could be.

But not this time.

“I wanted to see you,” he confessed. “About the other night.”

Wilbur’s expression lost that teasing edge. Grew softer. “Ah,” he said. “I probably should have told you this then, but it… slipped my mind, I guess.” He reached back to take off his beanie, running his hand through his hair. A nervous habit. “I was likely more, uhm… *forward* than I should have been. I’m sorry.”

Quackity could do nothing but stare at him dumbfounded for a moment. Is… Did he think Q was here for an *apology?* After their brief kinda-sorta-maybe flirting just now? After not kissing him (on the lips, at least) that night? There were no words. He’d learned to expect the unexpected, but shit like that? Still threw him for a loop.

And it was at that moment he noticed something new about Wilbur. One unrelated to the conversation at hand, but a detail that grabbed his attention with a vice-like grip and refused to let go.

When he'd arrived, the gauze wrapped around Wil's arm was stark white and fresh. Probably newly-applied, if he was willing to guess. But after returning the beanie to its rightful place on his head, it had earned a spot of red. One that was blooming, branching out and growing, before his very eyes. Wilbur, for the moment, seemed not to notice it. His eyes were fixed on the floor, only barely risking a glance up to meet Q's gaze.

"You, uh… you don't need to apologize." He finally found his words. "But before anything else, are you… good?"

Wil looked confused. "Yeah, why?"

"You're bleeding." He pointed to the spot. The bandages were almost completely spoiled crimson by now.

Wilbur's eyes followed the pointing to his destination, then he sighed. Let out a few curses under his breath as he started unwrapping the gauze. He moved to stand up from his spot, but Quackity interrupted him with a feather-light touch. It still stopped him in his tracks.

"Here, let me," he said. "I owe you, after all."

"You don't have to--"

"Shut up," he interrupted, but with none of the usual venom those words tended to carry. "I'm gonna help you, and you can't fuckin' *stop* me." He moved to the chest. "You got spares in here?"

Wil rolled his eyes, but returned to his lounging. "I don't think I *have* any more, but if you wanna check? Be my guest."

With permission, he opened the chest. It was pretty full, near-bursting with the typical gear. An obviously-used iron sword and pickaxe, a bunch of cobblestone, some smelted ingots (mainly iron, but some gold and lapis here and there). There were a bunch of other things unimportant to the matter at hand, but no matter how he searched, he couldn't find anything that could potentially be used as any sort of bandage.

One of his rolled-up sleeves loosened and lowered as he searched, and he got an idea. It was white, it was somewhat durable, it was cloth. It would do. Unrolling it completely, he grabbed the iron sword out of the disorganized heap.

"Uh, Big Q…?" He heard Wilbur say from behind him. He was probably watching him, and pulling a sword out? Rarely helpful, in most cases.

Except this one. Quackity didn't respond, just got to work on cutting off the sleeve. Not *completely,* just up to about his elbow. The blade was a bit dull, so that made his endeavor a little bit more difficult. He tried his best to be careful regardless. This situation didn't need

*more* bleeding, after all. After the deed was done, he ripped one side to open the fabric up and make it thinner, but more useful.

When he turned around, he was not prepared for what he saw. He probably should have been.

Wilbur's jacket and sweater had been discarded, the jacket neatly tucked next to him. His bleeding arm hung limply while his other was hard at work adjusting the threads in his stitches. A small spool of black thread lay on his lap, and a needle was held within well-practiced fingers. He was so hard at work, he didn't notice Quackity staring.

But, despite himself, Quackity was *indeed* staring.

He had no excuse for it, really. He'd seen and stared at plenty of physiques *much* more impressive than the pale twig-thin torso he feasted his eyes on. There were no abs, or signs of muscle to speak of. A few edges of his ribs were visible and stuck out a little bit. Not enough to be *seriously* concerning, but enough to be *slightly* so. A capital Y-shaped stitched-up cut started at his chest and ran down to *just* above his belly button. His mind unhelpfully supplied the thought of running his hands along it, feeling the tight threads that held him together. Maybe even--

*Snap out of it,* he chastised himself. *Now's not the time for shit like this. Besides, you'll never hear the end of it if he notices.*

With that incentive, he broke himself out of whatever weird trance he'd been under and strode to the couch. Wil looked up to him at the movement. At the sight of the now-cut sleeve, his brows furrowed.

"No such luck, huh?" He paused his needlework to dab at the bleeding residue with the gauze. "You didn't have to do that, you know. That looked like a nice shirt."

Quackity shrugged nonchalantly. "It's whatever," he moved to sit right next to Wil on the couch, on the same side as the limp arm. "I have, like, 5 identical ones at home, so losing one isn't *that* big of a deal."

"You don't *have* to throw it out." He discarded the gauze, the area around the stitching was as clean as it could be without much water. "Who knows? You might start a new fashion trend." He gave Q the usual smile at that, but this time it annoyed him *far less* than it usually did. It didn't annoy him at all.

Instead, he chuckled a little bit. "Kind of a shitty fashion trend, if you ask me." He offered the shirt-gauze to Wilbur.

He took it, exchanging it for the needle and thread. *"You* just wouldn't know good taste if it bit you in the arse, Mr. '6 Identical White Button-Downs'," he teased. "Mind re-threading the back? It's kinda awkward, from my angle."

At the 'good taste' comment, he was heavily tempted to respond with something like *'must be the reason I'm kinda into you',* but decided against it. It was hard enough for him to grapple with accepting it mentally. Speaking it gave it *weight,* made it known. Once it was

spoken, that was it. He couldn't take it back. Not *well,* at least. So instead, he went with something simpler.

"You, of all people, can't call me out for supposedly having no taste when *this* is where you live." He spoke while he worked. He wasn't sure if Wilbur could even feel the sutures he was making, but he made sure to be as careful as he could. "You don't even have a *couch.* I'm surprised you could even build a ceiling for this shithole."

"Oh, so I'm *tasteless* now because I'm *poor?"* He hammed it up with a wrist to the forehead and leaning the back of his head against Quackity's shoulder. Thankfully it didn't move his arm too much. Despite the theatrics, his light tone betrayed that there was no true ill will. "How *elitist* of you, Big Q. This shack is just my humble beginning, the foundation for my ambitions."

He focused on the teasing and his work to avoid the impulsive corner of his brain screaming at him that he was right there, it'd be so easy to just stoop his neck a little bit to kiss him. Now wasn't a good time.

So instead, he rolled his eyes. "Sure, sure. Whatever you say." He finished the final suture, and moved to hand the needle back to Wilbur. "You wanna cut this?"

"Sure." Wilbur said, but didn't take the needle from him. Instead, his hand moved under Quackity's to gently push it up to his mouth. Once the thread was close enough, he opened his mouth and snagged it onto one of his canine teeth. With a tug or two, the thread was cut. Wil barely even moved his head off Quackity's shoulder. Only then did he actually take the needle from Q's grasp to nonchalantly tuck it and the spool back into his jacket pocket.

That should *not* have been hot.

And yet the room felt a little warmer. Not too much, thankfully, but definitely enough to notice the change.

"Wil," he said before he could stop himself. "I have a question."

Wilbur looked up to meet his gaze. His smile was small, but easy, his lips were right *fucking there*-- "Sure, what is it?"

There were a couple options he could have gone with. That he was tempted to go with. *Did you mean it when you said you'd take me up on my offer? What the fuck is this? Can I kiss you?* Just to… y'know, name a couple prominent ones.

But he caught himself. He couldn't help his *stupid goddamn heart* latching onto yet another person, but experience made him less reckless. He'd been burned before. And Wilbur was a roaring fire, an accident practically *begging* to happen. Fire could be warm, and beautiful even in destruction, but he didn't want to be destroyed. No matter how *badly* a part of him wanted to be ash.

"Does it hurt?" He asked instead. A safer question, but it still expressed concern. "Y'know, the stitches, the bleeding?"

Wilbur moved off him to shake his head, but didn't go far. "Doesn't feel like much at all, actually," he confessed. "When this happens, it sorta just… goes numb for a while. It gets that kinda pins-and-needles feeling, you know? Takes a while to wear off, go back to normal."

"Is this sorta thing *common?"* Seemed like an annoyance to deal with.

"Not really," Wilbur was nonchalant about it. "It just… *happens* once in a while. Can't predict it, can't control it, just sorta have to roll with it." He shrugged as best he could. "Wasn't anticipating it to happen *tonight,* but such is life."

He couldn't help but smile. "So you gotta be the one dealing with something chaotic for once? What a *tragedy."*

Wilbur chuckled a little. "Only once in a while," he said, reaching for his sweater. "Speaking of which, before I cover it up, wanna kiss it better?" It was bait, definitely a joke.

Yet Quackity rose to his level for some payback. He cradled the stitched-up arm gently, like it was precious. He ran his thumb lightly over the new sutures. His gaze was focused on what he was doing so as not to mess up his recently-finished work, but he still saw confusion flicker across Wil's face. Felt him tense slightly as Quackity leaned forward to press his lips gingerly to scarred skin. It didn't linger long.

Then he sat back up like nothing happened. "There," he said, like what he just did was perfectly normal. "That good enough?"

Wilbur stared at him with wide eyes and lightly-flushed cheeks for a moment before the spell was broken. He couldn't help but smile at that. Two could play at that game, and it looked like Quackity won this round.

Wil didn't respond verbally, just nodded and got to work putting his sweater and jacket back on. Afterward, the two hung out and talked a little while longer. It was… *nice,* to hang out with Wilbur in a calm and sober situation. Nicer than he thought it'd be.

The two danced around the unspoken question. Neither dared ask it, or acknowledge its existence.

For now.

End Notes

if you enjoyed, please comment! i love getting feedback and Validation
my tumblr: squishy--squish

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